

Running Head: PRE-EMPLOYMENT PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT - MORTON GROVE

Executive Development

Pre-employment Personality Assessment
in the Morton Grove Fire Department

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Abstract

The problem is that the Morton Grove Fire Department (MGFD) had not determined if personality assessments were effective predictors of performance. The purpose of this research was to identify pre-employment alternatives to effectively predict future performance.

Descriptive research was used to determine the desirable personality traits of Morton Grove firefighters. Assessment tools currently used during pre-employment screening were reviewed.

The procedure reviewed the use of personality assessment to predict future performance.

The traits of Public Service Orientation, Work Attitude and Respect for Authority were desirable. The 2 assessments used provided valid results. Trait-based assessments interpreted by qualified professionals were 87% effective.

Recommendations included continued use of a psychologist during pre-employment screening and quantifiable interpretation of Relevant Job Attributes. Increased interaction of department administration, the psychologist, and the Fire and Police Commission was also cited.

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Pre-employment Personality Assessment in the Morton Grove Fire Department

Introduction

When attempting to provide high quality public safety services to a diverse community, the proactive fire executive may find it helpful to attempt to provide the most effective work force possible. Assessing the relative effectiveness of any service-oriented work force often relies upon the subjective opinion of many different individuals both within and outside the organization. If departments consistently strive to predict future job performance of firefighter candidates, the fire service organization and community can benefit through the efficient expenditure of public funds, time, effort, and other resources. “The key goal of evaluating or assessing job candidates is to predict...how applicants will perform on the job before they are hired” (Mercer, 1993, p. 2). In addition, the avoidance of employment related litigation resulting from the potential discharge of under-performing employees is a benefit that a proactive emergency manager must consider in overall risk management for the organization. It is estimated that almost six times more law suits are filed for wrongful termination when compared to those filed for failure to hire. (Donohue and Siegelman, 1991). “A frontline paramedic has the opportunity to cause a catastrophic loss to an agency.....The fire chief is the one then left...accountable to the city...for those actions that generate litigation.” (Evans, 2005, para. 5). Lastly, a 2001 study through the University of Minnesota found that firefighters that possessed high degrees of introverted personality experienced higher frequencies of injuries. (“Minnesota study,” 2001).

Much time and energy has been devoted in recent years to analysis of the job of firefighter and/or firefighter/paramedic in order to identify and focus on the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are necessary to effectively respond to a variety of situations and hazards. As a

result, pre-employment screening processes that are able to quantify cognitive and physical abilities of candidates are widely used for selection. If the fire service could effectively identify the personality traits of individuals who have proven to be highly effective in this vocation, appropriate pre-employment assessment instruments could be selected and administered to the ultimate benefit of the customers that we serve.

While the benefits of diversity within a team are well known and desirable, behavioral diversity of individuals to the point of divergence from established organizational goals, expectations, and standards is often counterproductive, costly, inefficient, and unsafe. Fire service leaders that are able to identify department members that have propensity to consistently demonstrate attitudes or personality characteristics that lead to divergent behavior may have the ability to intervene early in the selection process and make effective decisions or give relevant input regarding personnel recruitment.

The problem is that the Morton Grove Fire Department (MGFD) has failed to determine if pre-employment personality assessments currently used are effective predictors of future job performance. The purpose of this research is to review the process and methods currently used during pre-employment evaluation of firefighter candidates in the MGFD in order to identify the most effective alternatives available to predict future job performance. The descriptive research method will be used to answer the following questions:

1. What are the desirable personality traits of firefighter/paramedics in the MGFD?
2. What assessment tools are currently used to identify the personality traits of candidates for firefighter/paramedic in the MGFD?
3. How can assessment of personality traits of candidates be used to predict future job performance on the MGFD?

Background and Significance

The Village of Morton Grove, incorporated in 1897, is located in the northwest corner of Cook County and lies near the northwest border of the city of Chicago, Illinois. The suburb is often described as a “residential community” that saw its largest expansion and population during the post-World War II era when the population increased to nearly 28,000. Light industrial and retail occupancies comprise approximately 15% of the buildings in town, with single family residences constituting the majority of occupancies. It is estimated that there are approximately 6,200 single family residences within the corporate limits. In addition, there also exists twenty-two (22), 5 to 6 story condominium buildings within the village. These condominium buildings account for approximately 2,000 additional separate living units.

The Morton Grove Fire Department (MGFD) is a full time career department consisting of 43 sworn members. Department personnel are cross-trained as both firefighters and paramedics. The average age of an MGFD firefighter is 41 years old with an average of 13 years of service. Less than 33% of members have attained a Bachelors Degree or higher. All members are at least high school graduates (MGFD, 2007b).

The department is responsible for providing fire and emergency medical service (EMS) response to a population of 22,500 over an area of 5.2 square miles. In addition to fire and EMS response, the department offers hazardous materials, technical rescue, and fire investigation response services. A traditional 24/48 hour schedule exists resulting in the assignment of personnel to one of three separate duty shifts. The department maintains two separate fire stations from which one engine and one advanced life support (ALS) ambulance are used for response from each station.

An average total of 3,075 alarms were responded to annually between the years of 2001–2005 (MGFD, 2007a). Total alarm response has been increasing at an average annual rate of approximately 1.5% per year since 2001. In 2006, EMS alarms increased by 3.5% as compared to the previous five-year average. EMS alarms represented approximately 69% of the department's 2006 non-automatic aid responses (MGFD, 2007a).

The Village of Morton Grove (Village) maintains a mayor-village board-village administrator form of government. It is a home rule community. As a result, the Village has the authority (in compliance with state and county limitations) to levy taxes, pass ordinances, and maintain sovereign authority in the interest of the people of the Village.

In 1965 a full-time Village fire department was established through the adoption of Title 3, Chapter 2 of the Municipal Code. In addition, and in accordance with Chapter 65 of Illinois Compiled Statute, the Fire and Police Commission of Morton Grove was established (three civilian members) and given authority over hiring and promotion of positions established by the fire chief. 65 Illinois Compiled Statute (ILCS) 5/ Article 10, Division 2.1, requires that the local Fire and Police Commission (F&PC) establishes and maintains a current and rank ordered eligibility list of candidates to be offered entry-level firefighter positions based upon the administration of a competitive selection process (1967). In addition, the statute allows the F&PC to establish (within the limits of other state and federal criteria) its own rules and process for maintaining the Candidate Eligibility List. As a result, the Fire and Police Commission of Morton Grove (FPCMG) publishes and maintains the *Rules and Regulations of the Fire and Police Commission of Morton Grove* (2003).

Under the aforementioned statutes and rules, no candidate may hold a position on the fire department Eligibility List for longer than two years from the date of posting (ILCS, 1967;

FPCMG, 2003). The process of establishing a new Eligibility List in Morton Grove begins with advertisement of the testing process in a variety of public venues (newspapers, internet, local television). Candidates complete a written application and are scheduled for written examination. This written examination is currently administered through a private contractor and consists of a number of modules. A ranked list of written exam results is forwarded to the Commission within one week of test completion. The Commission notifies the highest scoring 150 candidates and invites their participation in the physical ability phase of testing. (FPCMG, 2003).

The FPCMG has utilized the nationally available Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) to assess physical attributes of fire candidates since 2001. A ranked list of candidates passing the CPAT is established. The Commission uses its discretion to determine the number of candidates to invite to oral interviews (normally the highest ranking 50 candidates). A structured interview is given by the three commissioners and monitored by the fire chief. The commissioners apply subjective scoring criteria and a preliminary eligibility list is posted. Candidates are given 10 business days to apply for preference points to be incorporated into their scores (military or educational points). The final list is posted. Any vacancy experienced in the Morton Grove Fire Department will be filled by offering the highest ranking candidate on the current list a final interview with the Commission. A preliminary background check is started. Successful completion of the final interview is marked by the extension of a conditional offer of employment to the candidate. (FPCMG, 2003).

The federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits a potential employer from assessing a candidate's medical condition, physical or mental disability prior to the conditional offer of employment. In addition, any tests used should be job related and required of all candidates (Brull, 1999, p. 1). This interpretation is why the FPCMG has adopted the practice of

administering the medical and psychological assessments after the conditional offer of employment is extended to the candidate.

In 1991 the MGF D began to use a private vendor to perform comprehensive psychological assessments of firefighter candidates as part of the overall pre-employment screening process. Since 1991 a total of 23 current Morton Grove firefighters have been assessed utilizing an identical psychological screening. 90% of these current firefighters were evaluated by the same private vendor psychologist. The actual results of the assessments were given to the FPCMG for consideration in the hiring process. All records of the assessments are archived at 6250 Lincoln Avenue in Morton Grove, Illinois and are not available to the public.

The psychological assessment of firefighter candidates in Morton Grove have been administered by Dr. Dennis Selvig, Psy D since 1991. Dr. Selvig is a behavioral psychologist and currently manages his own personnel assessment service; Personnel Strategies Inc. of Northfield, Illinois. Dr. Selvig's clinical background includes five years of service diagnosing and treating prisoners serving criminal sentences in the Kane County Jail in Geneva, Illinois. He has been performing pre-employment assessments for fire and police candidates since the 1980's. Dr. Selvig's approach to assessment of firefighter candidates is based upon his training as a behavioral psychologist. He observes candidate behaviors (physical and verbal) within the context of controlled settings in order to provide insight as to their personalities. The doctor's insight is also augmented by the administration of standardized assessment instruments (tests) that are well known and widely available throughout the occupational psychologist community (D. Selvig, personal communication, September 7, 2006).

The typical firefighter pre-employment assessment administered by Dr. Selvig, on behalf of Morton Grove, requires approximately 6 to 7 hours to complete. The candidate reports to

Selvig's office and completes two written personality assessment instruments: The NEO Personality Inventory-Revised and the Personality Assessment Inventory. The remainder of the assessment is devoted to a combination of structured and free form oral interview(s). After the assessment is completed, a written report is issued to the FPCMG. The report includes analysis of specific relevant job attributes such as Public Service Orientation, Teamwork, Occupational Resiliency, etc. The report is ended with a summary and recommendation section in which Dr. Selvig presents his overall opinion as to whether the candidate is suitable as a firefighter in Morton Grove. (Personal communication, September 7, 2006).

A candidate that successfully completes all phases of the conditional offer of employment is hired and sworn-in as a Probationary Firefighter (PFF). Initial firefighter training begins with the completion of an eight week firefighter academy. Following academy graduation the PFF is assigned to frontline activity on one of two engine companies. He is subsequently supervised and evaluated by his lieutenant. During the two year probationary period monthly evaluations are completed by the lieutenant. (Village of Morton Grove, 2000). These evaluations provide feedback as to the PFF's observed behaviors and form the basis of assessing his competencies related to the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) necessary for the position. These KSAs are listed and measured in a variety of ways and documented in numerous department standards (MGFD, 2003; Village of Morton Grove, 2000). The establishment, measurement, and improvement of KSAs are largely based upon a PFF's cognitive abilities. Monthly evaluations attempt to measure subjective criteria such as *attitude*. However the lieutenant is left to base this assessment upon behaviors observed during the normal course of a work shift. The PFF may be terminated by the FPCMG upon recommendation by the fire chief at any time during the probationary period. (FPCMG, 2003).

After successful completion of the probationary period the firefighter is subject to periodic verbal feedback and coaching from the shift lieutenant as well as an annual written evaluation. Firefighters violating the established written rules and or standards of the organization are subject to discipline. Firefighters who are evaluated as not meeting the performance expectations mandated by other established standards are coached and mentored when necessary and Work Improvement Plans are established to ensure future relevant and measurable feedback for the member. (MGFD, 2002).

This applied research project is directly related to the Executive Fire Officer Program course, *Executive Leadership*, in that the principles employed to effectively assess the Morton Grove Fire Department's pre-employment screening process allows the organization to "...provide clarity as to where key individual competencies need to exist..." so that "...(a)lignment of the workforce with these capabilities becomes an important task.." as it relates to effective succession and workforce planning (USFA, 2005, p. 7-3). Results of this research will add data and or insight regarding personnel recruitment issues facing today's fire service. The possibility of cost avoidance as it may relate to personnel management is a desirable objective of the Village of Morton Grove as well as the MGFD.

The Village is currently facing financial challenges as it strives to maintain levels of service expected by taxpayers. By striving to ensure that the MGFD has methods to effectively identify an employee's personality traits, resulting efficiencies should enhance direct coaching and support efforts in order to achieve a new level of functioning and maximize the utilization of shrinking resources such as administrative time, effort and public funds. As a result, this research will assist in meeting the United States Fire Administration (USFA) operational objective of effectively responding to the emerging issue of efficiently providing for the

emergency needs of communities through more effective leadership and management of personnel.

Literature Review

The majority of research regarding pre-employment personality assessment was identified by the use of resources available through the National Fire Academy (NFA) Learning Resource Center (LRC) located in Emmitsburg, Maryland. In addition, generalized fire service text books available through the Morton Grove Fire Department's fire service library were also reviewed. Although these fire service text books did provide some general background as to issues of firefighter recruitment, more recently published periodicals, research studies, and dissertations provided the most current information regarding the experience of other researchers. Materials identified by use of the LRC's Card Catalog were obtained directly from the NFA while attending a course or through use of the On-line Card Catalog, local public libraries and the Interlibrary Loan program.

A significant amount of literature can be found relating personality types, traits, or characteristics to organizational or occupational efficiency. However, as the search parameters were narrowed in an attempt to specify existing research related to firefighter selection, this researcher found very little material. Generally accepted psychological theory regarding personality as it relates to career choice is varied. Industrial and occupational psychologists have been theorizing since the early 1900s in an effort to decrease employee turnover and increase satisfaction. Holland (1997) in *Making Vocational Choices: A Theory of Vocational Personalities and Work Environments* theorized that an individual would experience greater job satisfaction if his personality type closely matched his job. General personality theory seems to follow one of two schools of thought. *Personality type* is an expression of an individual's

collective inherent traits and how they choose to manifest these traits through behavior. This could also be referred to as a holistic approach to assess personality. Secondly, *personality trait* theory tends to characterize individuals in terms of five definable and measurable attributes of personality also known to psychologists as the Big Five; Neuroticism, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness (Hogan, Johnson & Briggs, 1997). Generally speaking, this researcher found that the majority of individual theory or test instruments could be characterized by attempting to measure personality according one of these two schools of thought i.e. trait theory or type theory.

It was found that a significant body of work exists that strives to adapt personality theory to the occupation of law enforcement professional. A limited number of researchers, however, have attempted to apply the various theories to the vocation of firefighter or rescue worker. The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) publishes *Managing Fire and Rescue Services* (Compton & Granito, 2002). Although this source does not specifically evaluate the process of personality assessment, it did encourage caution in the use of psychological assessment of firefighter candidates. This reference suggested to interpret any psychological assessment as advisory in nature, to review the techniques of psychological professionals prior to their employment, and to corroborate the findings of the psychologist with other data obtained in the pre-employment process.

Of the limited resources surveyed that applied directly to firefighters, it was found that the following personality assessment instruments were most often cited:

The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) uses over 500 questions and employs a personality trait theory. It is generally used as a diagnostic tool for personality or emotional disorders (Kramer & Conoley, 1992)

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) uses over 150 questions to identify one of 16 possible personality types. This instrument seems to be very popular and is not designed as a diagnostic tool to identify mental pathology (Plake & Impara, 2001).

The Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R) is a trait-based instrument. Interpretations differ regarding this instrument's application into the clinical or diagnostic arena. The *Mental Measurement Yearbook* constitutes the psychology industry's standard in the critique of thousands of instruments used to measure a variety of psychological criteria. The twelfth edition of this book suggests that the use of the NEO, along with other instruments, could be used to determine mental pathology (Conoley & Impara, 1995).

The Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI) is a trait-based instrument consisting of over 300 items. It is used by clinical psychologists to identify abnormal or pathological areas of mental ability. This test is considered to be moderately reliable and valid according to the *Mental Measurements Yearbook* (Conoley & Impara, 1995).

The Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI) attempts to use Holland's personality type model to attempt to characterize a person into one of six possible categories. Leckband (2005) attempted to utilize this instrument in order to more effectively screen firefighters. Although a review of the HPI could not be found in the *Mental Measurement Yearbook*, Dr. Robert Hogan infers that it is not intended to be used to diagnose mental disabilities (1996).

In an effort to determine the effectiveness of personality assessment during the candidate screening process in Morton Grove, a review of existing guidance on the subject was done. The United States Department of Justice (USDOJ) publishes *An ADA Guide for Local Governments* (2004). Specifically, the USDOJ strives to detail "action steps" that governments can take in an attempt to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). ADA also strives to

protect persons with limiting medical or psychological conditions from undue discrimination regarding employment opportunities. ADA defines a disability as "...a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities..." (USDOJ, 1990, Sec. 3).

In his article, Harry Brull of Personnel Decisions International opines that the use of assessments that attempt to identify the existence of mental or psychological illness would be very restricted by ADA in a pre-employment process. The article advises to use assessments that measure attributes that have been shown to be job related. This article also cites a number of standardized tests that might be more appropriate for assessment after a conditional offer of employment has been made (1997). However, the legal opinion of Brian O'Conner, published in the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association *Legal Corner* newsletter, states that "...in the case of psychological testing, such testing will not be considered "medical" if it is not used to diagnose a "medical" condition, but rather as assessing personality traits." (2004, para. 1).

The body of research of personality theory as it relates to the fire service is mostly limited to attempting to ascertain if specific desirable personality types or traits can be determined in existing firefighters. Some of the researchers utilized variations of the aforementioned assessment instruments on samplings of firefighters currently on the job in an attempt to identify commonly shared characteristics (Leckband, 2005; Pappas, 2001).

In an effort to determine the results of other research conducted as it relates to the correlation of personality traits to the prediction of vocational success as a firefighter, the archive of existing Executive Fire Officer (EFO) Applied Research Projects (ARP) was surveyed through the Learning Resource Center of the National Fire Academy. Reynolds (2004) researched a variety of aspects of pre-employment psychological assessments. This ARP utilized an extensive survey of fire departments to determine how psychological assessments

were being performed and how their results were being used. Of the departments surveyed in this study, 13% reported that the pre-employment assessments used “always correlate...” predicting future performance (p. 32). 53% of surveyed departments reported that psychological assessments were predictive of future job performance 66% of the time. It is significant that this research also found that the majority of departments responding to the survey (55%) reported that the traits of motivation, attitude, commitment, and desire were the most desired in prospective firefighters (p. 34 – 35). It should be noted that this ARP focused the survey questions on departments utilizing at least one of eight targeted personality instruments: The MMPI, the MBTI, the California Personality Inventory (CPI), the Catell 16PF, the Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation (FIRO), the Strong Vocational Interest Blank (SVIB), the Campbell Leadership Index (CLI), and the Campbell Organizational Survey (COS).

Both the Reynolds (2004) research and Gilliam (1999) conclude that the majority of fire service organizations considering personality in pre-employment settings emphasize the desire for candidates rated high in motivation, attitude, respect for others, and teamwork. Many times departments preferred these attributes over more tangible characteristics such as fire service experience and certifications. Gilliam’s research utilized surveys of incumbent firefighters in Sandusky, Ohio in an attempt to quantify desirable traits of entry level personnel. The results clearly identified general personality attributes as being the most desired by the survey group (1999). However, it should be noted that the results of Gilliam’s research recommended assessment of personality characteristics such as values and attitudes and was not specific as to measurable scales, methods or instruments used to assess these attributes.

As noted previously, this researcher was able to find a great deal of previous studies of this subject as it related to hiring police personnel, however, empirically validated studies related to the fire service were very limited.

Doctoral dissertations related to the subject were reviewed. Pappas (2001) completed a comparative study attempting to relate the personality types of a national sample of incumbent firefighters with a sampling of fire cadets. The cadets were currently enrolled in a high school program exploring vocations in the fire service. This research attempted a correlation using the MBTI personality type instrument. The study found that the majority of cadets and incumbent firefighters shared the MBTI personality type of *extrovert* (preferring to focus on the outer world of people and things) or *judger* (preferring planned and organized approaches to life) (p. 165). The study also found a high occurrence of the *thinker* personality type in incumbent firefighters. This study attempted to compare the two groups and made no attempt to correlate the findings to predict success as a firefighter.

Leckband (2005) attempted to develop a personality profile of firefighters involved in various disciplines within the fire service (i.e. firefighters or firefighters/paramedics). This study hypothesized that a person working in a job that did not match his personality type would have poor job satisfaction and under perform. The study administered the Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI), and two related personality trait instruments, to 87 firefighters in a south Florida city. The data from this study found that, using the HPI trait scales, low scores for *prudence* (conscientious, conforming, dependable) and *altruism* (concern for the welfare of others) related to increased frequency of job reprimands. In addition, low *sociability* (the need or enjoyment of interacting with others) traits relate to increased suspensions (p. 114). Conversely,

the data showed that high scores for *imaginative* (creative or unusual thinking) related to greater numbers of commendations on the job (p. 117).

The article; *Rescue Personality: Fact or Fiction* (Wagner, 2005) explores the theory of Jeffery Mitchell. Mitchell's theory states that the distinct rescue personality is pervasive in today's fire service. The rescue personality is described as empathetic and dedicated. Mitchell's research attempted to correlate this personality type with the ability to effectively deal with the stressors of the job. The article notes that a number of researchers have been unable to validate Mitchell's theory. Specifically the article notes "...the lack of clear alignment for the rescue personality concept with any major theoretical...trait approaches in personality psychology." (para. 9). The conclusion of this article calls for increased research on the subject.

Chief Paul Antonellis (2006) suggests that many firefighters share common personality characteristics. Antonellis describes firefighter's personalities as time and success oriented that can become easily bored. Other terms he uses to describe firefighters are; team players, anti-quitters, dedicated workers, helpers, and adrenalin junkies. However, this article does not attempt to correlate these observations to any specific theory or selection instrument.

In an attempt to determine how private industry has addressed these issues of efficient selection, a number of resources were reviewed. A large health care network in Philadelphia has recently recognized the importance of using personality assessments in employee selection. "Personality assessment tools can be used to understand the current staff and predict the type of person who will be the best fit for the existing culture as well as the job requirements." (Carey, 2004, p. 169).

Wendell Williams is a PhD in industrial psychology and maintains Scientific Selection Inc.; a consulting business designed to assist organizations with employee selection decisions.

His article, *Is Personality the Ultimate Solution to Hiring?*, suggests caution in the way trait instruments are applied. He suggests that personality traits are only good predictors of performance if candidates already possess the necessary skills for the job. However he does indicate that if an employee does possess the essential skills, the right personality traits can increase productivity significantly (electronic version, 2006).

Schmidt and Hunter performed a meta-analysis of a variety of selection methods as predictors of job performance in 1998. The results of this study showed interview-based subjective evaluations of personality to be valid in this prediction between 38% and 51% of the time. The value of these validity coefficients is considered to be good to very good (1998).

Barrick and Mount found that the collective research of various industrial psychologists suggests that personality traits are good predictors of general job performance. Particularly they cite the personality traits of conscientiousness and emotional stability to be the best predictors of general overall performance. In particular they also found that the personality trait of agreeableness is highly predictive in jobs that require a high degree of teamwork, cooperation, and empathy for others (2005).

A review and analysis of the existing literature of researchers and authors had significant effect upon this research project. A large amount of general recruitment theory recognizes the utility of personality assessments to enhance hiring decisions. However, little practical research regarding firefighters has been done. Even the few fire service specific references that were reviewed revealed little opinion or empirical findings specific to desirable personality traits. Most fire service researchers agreed that the use of any assessment instrument must be reviewed by a qualified psychology professional to ensure prudent choices are made. As a result, the

majority of researchers conclude that personality aspects of a fire candidate should be given some consideration in the hiring process.

Answering Research Question 1 requires consideration of the subjective opinion of appropriate stakeholders and decision-makers of the MGFD. Although each fire service organization has some characteristics unique to its mission or demographic, the literature and data reviewed assumes basic commonly shared organizational objectives of protection of life and property from a variety of hazards. Some researchers have used written surveys of various departments to elicit opinions as to desirable personality traits. It is assumed that the personnel needs of the Morton Grove Fire Department are not drastically different from the departments cited in the available literature.

Literature and reports archived in personnel files of the MGFD were reviewed in order to effectively address Research Question 2. The specific candidate psychological profiles are not available for public review. However their general content, as they related to process, assisted in research of this question. The concept of reviewing the current tools and process used to psychologically assess and evaluate the personality traits of an MGFD candidate proved to be a useful activity when providing critical feedback to any private vendor used for this purpose.

Research Question 3 is an attempt to practically apply concepts developed from the research. The vast majority of literature, either directly or indirectly, stresses the need to incorporate the assistance of psychology professionals in the interpretation and application of data as this question implies. Responses to Research Question 3 will be influenced by the experience of past researchers that will subsequently be compared with Morton Grove's experience and capabilities. The modification of current pre-employment process or the design and implementation of additional screening instruments could result.

Procedures

The stated purpose of this research is to review the process and methods currently used during pre-employment evaluation of firefighter candidates in the MGF in order to identify the most effective alternatives available to predict future job performance. The following procedure was used in an effort to not only clarify the existing challenges in Morton Grove, but also to utilize the past experiences of other researchers and agencies to accomplish the stated purpose. A descriptive research methodology was used. The main goal of utilizing the descriptive research methodology was to determine how the desirable personality traits of MGF firefighters, along with observations and data compiled by other researchers, could be applied to other fire service organizations. To this end, the following procedure was implemented.

It was necessary to begin by reviewing the psychological pre-employment screening process currently used in Morton Grove. As described previously, all hiring of entry level firefighters is the purview of the Fire and Police Commission of Morton Grove (Commission). This Commission has promulgated rules and procedures used in the establishment of a ranked eligibility list per Illinois state statute. After standardized written and physical ability tests are administered, an oral interview by the Commission is completed. Candidates are placed on the eligibility list by resulting score in descending rank order. When a vacancy occurs, a background check is done and the Commission conducts a final oral interview during which it is determined whether to make a conditional offer of employment (FPCMG, 2003).

A candidate successfully completing the final oral is directed to complete a psychological evaluation administered by Dr. Dennis Selvig, Psy D. Since Dr. Selvig has provided 90% of the candidate psychological reports since 1991, he was contacted for an administrative review of this process. On September 7, 2006 the established purpose of this research was outlined to Dr.

Selvig in a meeting at 6250 Lincoln, Morton Grove. In the meeting Dr. Selvig reviewed the sequence of events and written instruments used during an assessment for MGF. Concepts regarding the limits of interpretation of the NEO and PAI personality assessments currently used in the psychological screening process were discussed. Dr. Selvig also reviewed the presumed limitations of the assessment as a whole. He stated that the assessment and resulting recommendation was based upon information available to him at the time of the assessment. He also stated that the written report issued after completion of the assessment; the Candidate Pre-employment Psychological Assessment (CPPA), is an attempt to translate the candidate's psychological attributes into a reasonable prediction of anticipated job performance. It was emphasized that this evaluation is a composite of results from standardized written tests and oral interviews administered and conducted by Dr. Selvig. The procedure for this ARP involves utilizing a subjectively-based evaluation method to identify those current MGF firefighters that have been assessed by this process as administered by Dr. Selvig.

It was determined that, since 1991, Dr. Selvig has assessed 23 current MGF personnel. Each individual within this pool of firefighters was assigned an identification letter from A to W in order to reference their personal findings and to protect their identities for reference to this research. Permission to review the full Candidate Pre-employment Psychological Assessments for each firefighter was obtained through the Chairman of the Fire and Police Commission of Morton Grove. In addition, each firefighter's annual evaluation file was obtained from the secured file room located at 6250 Lincoln Avenue. Annual evaluations of firefighters are completed every December by the individual's supervising Lieutenant. They are reviewed by the District Chief and placed in the evaluation file by the Chief. Lastly, all appropriate records of commendation or discipline were identified in each individual's separate personnel file.

The above information pertinent to each firefighter was reviewed by this researcher. As a result of the review, all firefighters were subsequently assigned and placed into one of three performance categories of desirability: highly desirable, desirable, or not desirable. Placement in these performance categories was based upon a subjective application of desirability, by this researcher, after review of the performance material only (annual evaluations and personnel records). In order to decrease the possibility of personal bias, care was taken to not classify an individual in the *not desirable* performance category unless justification existed in the form of an annual evaluation indicating *below expectations* performance in the last three years or other written discipline (reprimands or suspensions) existed. A firefighter was placed in the *highly desirable* performance category if annual evaluations reflected consistent ratings of *exceeds expectations* in the past three years or department or department commendations existed. The resulting category classification is reflected in Appendix A.

After classification of the 23 firefighters was completed, each individual's Candidate Pre-employment Psychological Assessment (CPPA) was reviewed. The format of the CPPA has evolved slightly since 1991, however, each report divides assessment into evaluation categories called *relevant job attributes* (RJA) as defined by Dr. Selvig. The RJAs and their evaluation criteria are provided in Appendix B. The CPPA rates the candidate in each category of relevant job attribute as exhibiting one of the following four ratings: strong, acceptable, marginal, or poor. In addition to analysis of each firefighter's relevant job attributes, the overall narrative summary (Part II) of each CPPA was reviewed for additional insight. In this summary, Dr. Selvig attempts to provide an overall impression, based upon results of written and oral evaluation, of the candidate's probability of success as a firefighter in the MGF.

A compilation of each firefighter's relevant job attributes (RJA) is reflected in Appendix C. For purposes of this procedure, RJAs that were rated by Dr. Selvig as strong or as less than acceptable are shown in bold type. This approach was used in an effort to gather data that would assist in the answering of Research Question 1 and 3.

After compiling the collective results of the 23 firefighters, Dr. Selvig was contacted and a meeting was held to review the data. This meeting would also serve to directly explore the issues encompassed by Research Question 3. The meeting with Dr. Selvig was held at MGFD Station 4 on February 8, 2007.

Dr. Selvig was briefed as to the procedure that was used to compile the summary data shown in Appendix C. Dr. Selvig and his evaluations have served the MGFD and other area departments well since 1991, as a result his opinions and responses were viewed by this researcher to have the weight of expert opinion. This meeting had a profound effect upon the procedure and interpretation of its data in that it provided an opportunity for both parties to share interpretations of 15 years of the practical application of organizational selection theory as it related to the MGFD as well as provided a useful forum to review expectations for future professional interaction as consultant and client.

After the two and one half hour review was completed, the following insights were agreed upon:

- The best predictor of future behavior is the candidate's past behavior.
- Personality traits are enduring, however a candidate's state of mind at the time of evaluation is transient.
- The administration of the personality instruments (NEO and PAI) serve as a starting point in the evaluation. The results of these instruments, along with

responses received in oral follow-up, allow the evaluator to make inferences as to the relevant job attributes used.

- Personality types (as targeted by the MBTI and other theoretical models) are less important in application to the fire service than the demonstration of the effective use of the traits and skills reflected in the relevant job attributes.

These insights serve as the basic tenets used by Dr. Selvig in order to interpret the data elicited in the MGFD pre-employment psychological assessment process (personal communication, February 8, 2007).

After review of the compiled data, Dr. Selvig again emphasized that the purpose of the pre-employment psychological assessment was to provide a “snapshot” of the candidate’s personality traits as they relate to predicted success as a firefighter. He submitted that the use of his insights as they relate to a candidate’s desirability as an employee was the decision of the hiring body. He opined that the combined use of the CPPA with the Commission’s oral interview, as well as the results of a thorough background investigation would be the best use of the data (personal communication, February 8, 2007). Dr. Selvig’s general reactions to the data resulting from application of this procedure are reflected in the Results section of this ARP.

The use of the aforementioned review meeting with the MGFD psychological assessment vendor proved to have an unexpected effect upon this researcher’s response to Research Question 2. It was hypothesized at the beginning of this research that if one could identify desirable traits and identify an instrument to test for the traits that the pre-employment process could be improved by incorporating the use of the instrument. The insight gained as to the limitations of instruments currently used by the MGFD was very compelling.

The procedure for this research project requires consideration of a number of inherent assumptions and limitations. It can be assumed that the personality traits exhibited by the firefighters receiving the highest recognition in the form of annual evaluations or department commendations would be those most desired by the department. The categorizing of current firefighters as to their desirability was based upon annual evaluations of job performance. It is understood that such evaluations may have questionable reliability from year to year as well as the differences in the application of rating scales among various lieutenant evaluators. Secondly, the data reviewed for purposes of categorizing the firefighters is admittedly very narrow in scope. However, a simplistic approach was desirable in an effort to maintain an equivalent comparison scale between employees. Lastly, this research has reinforced the fact that the personality of a human being is an extremely complex and highly subjective attribute that is often quantifiably evaluated by self-reporting instruments that are subject to the failings of false reporting by the test-taker.

Results

What are the desirable personality traits of firefighter/paramedics in the MGFD?

Lacking an existing established written standard made answering this question challenging. Existing fire service-based surveys by Reynolds (2004) and Gilliam (1999) conclude that personality traits that show high levels of motivation, attitude, respect for others, and teamwork are most desirable. High imaginative traits, as assessed by the Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI) related to higher rates of commendation in firefighters (Leckband, 2005).

The data revealed by this research shows an interesting pattern and is summarized in Appendix C. Only three of the 23 current MGFD firefighters that were psychologically assessed prior to employment were categorized as exhibiting not desirable (ND) past job behaviors. All

three ND firefighters were rated as marginal in the pre-employment psychological assessment Relevant Job Attribute (RJA) scale of Public Service. Two of the three ND firefighters received CPPA ratings of marginal in the RJAs of Work Attitude, Chain of Command and Professional Development. Only one of the three ND firefighters was assessed to have any strong RJAs; Assertiveness.

Conversely, six of the 23 current MGFD firefighters that were psychologically assessed prior to their employment were categorized as exhibiting “highly desirable” (HD) past job behaviors. Three of the six were rated to have strong Public Service RJAs and five of these six were rated to have strong Work Attitude RJAs. Only one of the six was rated as showing marginal traits or behaviors as related to the RJA of Communication Skills.

When the collective results of the compiled CPPAs are reviewed holistically another pattern can be observed. Each of the three ND firefighters was found to have amassed individual collective RJA ratings with at least three marginals and one or no strong ratings. Conversely, of the six HD MGFD firefighters, only two were rated as less than acceptable in only one RJA. Four of the six HD firefighters consistently scored strong ratings in two or more RJAs (Appendix C).

The aforementioned collective MGFD result, when compared against the Relevant Job Attribute Evaluation Criteria (Appendix B), seems to show the organizational desire for a strong and conscientious work attitude. In addition, the results also point to a definite desire for strong public service orientation traits (motivated to serve versus self interests) and a healthy respect for the established chain of command (loyal, agreeable, open to hierarchical relationships). Acceptable traits of assertiveness and occupational resiliency were consistent through all but one of the 23 MGFD firefighters.

What assessment tools are currently used to identify the personality traits of candidates for firefighter/paramedic on the MGFD?

Research clearly showed that personality characteristics have only been considered during the pre-employment process for the MGFD since 1991. Since the same psychological professional has been used 90 % of the time, a superficial response to this question is simple. The implications of the results of this question will be amplified in the discussion section of this ARP.

The MGFD employs a private psychologist to administer a comprehensive pre-employment assessment for all firefighter candidates. Two separate personality inventories are given at the beginning of the process; the NEO-Revised and the Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI). Both tests are well recognized in the psychological community as yielding both reliable and valid results (Conoley & Impara, 1995).

Results of this research show that the overall assessment and recommendation for employment on the MGFD does not simply depend upon the numeric scoring of these instruments. Two separate meetings with the MGFD psychologist reveal that the results of these assessments serve as a starting point from which the assessor is able to begin to make inferences and predictions of future job performance. Therefore, the results of these Tests are interpreted, along with responses to verbal interviews and observed behavior, by a psychological professional in an attempt to identify job relevant personality traits that research and experience show are reliable predictors of future performance as a Morton Grove firefighter/paramedic.

How can assessment of personality traits be used to predict future job performance on the MGFD?

The results of this research question are compelling to both this researcher and the department's psychological assessment vendor. It is agreed that since no existing personality trait assessment tool has been proven to be 100 percent valid, that the most prudent approach might be to use a trait assessment as a starting point. The psychologist will then consider oral responses to questions as well as proof of past behavior gleaned from the background investigation or other third parties in order to provide a more well-rounded profile of the candidate.

Personality traits as well as past behaviors should be used to emphasize a candidate's public service orientation, work attitude, and respect for the chain of command. Although personality type assessments such as the Meyers Briggs Type Inventory (MBTI) have gained popularity recently, results from this research are not easily transferable to a personality type analysis (Pappas, 2001). The existence of myriad occupational-personality theories and the corresponding assessment instruments clearly indicate the need to continue to employ the services of a psychology professional to provide relevant opinion and recommendations to the department regarding selection strategies. However, it is only by the ongoing and consistent feedback from the department to the psychology professional that the continued refinement of a personality trait assessment tool can be considered as a possible predictor of job performance.

These results were consistent with the research of Reynolds (2004) in that 66% of departments responding to a survey agreed that psychological assessments, in general, were predictive of future job performance.

Discussion

The desirability of personality traits of firefighters within Morton Grove requires a subjective analysis. Such an examination must consider an objective analysis of the essential job

tasks of a firefighter on the MGF D in order to enhance reliability and validity. The current job description that also incorporates the previously established department standards (MGFD, 2003; Village of Morton Grove, 2000) is not unlike other job analyses throughout the country. The basic mission to protect life and property from the hostile effects of fire and other hazards is commonly held in the American fire service. The implications of answering this question may have profound effect not only within our small community, but also on fire service organizations facing the challenge of recruiting high quality personnel.

The combination of review of past research and analysis of Morton Grove data from the past fifteen years was significant. Although the topic of personality theory and measurements has evolved into an entire sub-category of psychology, this researcher is convinced that personality trait theory is the most conducive to reliable and consistent measurement and application to occupations. The fire service-specific research of Reynolds (2004), Gilliam (1999), and Leckband (2005) also confirms this. In addition, it was found in researching this ARP that generalized research by industrial psychologists largely centered on the personality trait theory (Barrick and Mount, 2005) as opposed to personality type theory. The desire to be able to identify the most desirable personality traits of a Morton Grove firefighter is also combined with the need to ensure that the establishment of such a standard does not unduly restrict the consideration of candidates for the position that may exhibit other personality traits. The interaction with Dr. Dennis Selvig, Psy D throughout this research was an important control factor to ensure that the assumptions and opinion of one executive fire officer would not skew the conclusions of the data in a manner that would adversely affect the department or individual candidates.

The fact that MGFD data shows a correlation between a candidate's pre-employment scores in specific Relevant Job Attributes and performance-based evaluations post-hiring is consistent with Barrick and Mounts findings (2005). The job of firefighter can be considered uniquely teamwork oriented with an overarching need to be empathetic to the needs of others. As such, a positive validity could be argued to stress the need to consider the selection of candidates that exhibit high ratings on trait scales of agreeableness, empathy for others, and conscientiousness as reflected in Appendix B. These traits also tended to agree with the findings of Gilliam (1999) that was somewhat less trait specific and emphasized the need to assess values and attitudes of candidates.

The fire service specific research of Pappas (2001) focused on the desirability of personality types as they relate to success in the fire service. This research used the MBTI and concluded that personality types of extroverts and thinkers were more often found in the Chicago Fire Department. Although this research relies upon type theory, it could be reasonably assumed that an extrovert personality type might also score high on a trait based extroversion scale when administered an instrument such as the NEO. In addition, the Pappas findings would also support the need to continue to require that cognitive-based written instruments continue to be administered in order to ensure an average to high capability of sound decision making i.e. thinking.

Since the current MGFD process does not administer either the NEO or PAI personality instruments until a conditional offer of employment has been extended to the candidate, it was determined to be an acceptable procedure from an ADA consideration. This also agrees with the recommendations of O'Conner (2004) and Brull (1997).

The question as to which available personality assessment instruments are currently used by the MGF D yields interesting outcomes. Trait-based instruments can be more easily and directly correlated. Both the NEO and PAI enjoy respected reputations for reliability and validity according to the *Mental Measurements Yearbook* (MMY) (Conoley & Impara, 1995). The MMY is considered by psychology professionals to be the benchmark of evaluations of these instruments. The results of the Leckband (2005) fire service research were based solely upon the use of the Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI). The HPI is also a trait-based instrument much like the NEO and PAI, however an evaluation of the HPI could not be found in the MMY by this researcher. In addition, Mary Leckband (the author of this dissertation) expressed profound gratitude to Dr. Joyce Hogan and Dr. Robert Hogan in the acknowledgement section of the dissertation. Dr. Joyce Hogan was also an evaluator of the project. These facts might call into question some or all of the evaluative assumptions and/or conclusions as to the effectiveness of the HPI as it relates to the fire service due to the possibility of personal bias.

The issue of the prediction of future job performance based upon the assessment of personality traits is a question posed since the industrial revolution. This researcher's original thesis assumed that if specific personality traits could be reliably identified and measured as to their desirability in firefighters, then an appropriate instrument could be utilized to screen prospective candidates. The validation of such a thesis might also allow fire service executives to extrapolate the reliability of the use of personality traits in the prediction of future job performance. The meta-analysis completed by Schmidt and Hunter (1998) concurs with the collective findings of Barrick and Mount (2005) with regard to the validity and utility of various psychological assessments as a function of prediction of future job performance. Mercer (1993) cited validation of pre-employment personality tests alone in the predictability of future

performance as a .38 validity correlation. This is considered as "...a good prediction of actual on-the-job behavior." (p.8). However, it seems clear that when personality and psychological assessments are coupled with other valid pre-employment testing, the validity correlations increase dramatically. According to Schmidt and Hunter (1998) the highest validity correlations exist between pre-employment work sample tests and future job performance at .51. It could be argued that the greatest predictor of future job performance might be derived through a combination of work sample and personality assessment. This rationale may assist in explaining why the use of broad-based assessment centers, particularly for promotions, has gained popularity in the fire service in recent years.

Even if the relative validity of the use of personality assessment is proven in the aforementioned studies, the predictive application of particular instruments to future performance on the MGFD is problematic without adequate supporting data. In this researcher's opinion, the data yielded by the review of the CPPAs of the 23 MGFD firefighters showing a high predictability correlation in the Relevant Job Attributes of Public Service Orientation, Work Attitude, and Chain of Command is significant. Ratings of less than acceptable (i.e. marginal) in these categories seems to correlate to less than desirable job behaviors on the MGFD. In addition, it appears that MGFD firefighters that were rated as strong in multiple Relevant Job Attributes tended to exhibit more desirable job behaviors (Appendix C). In fact, none of the three MGFD firefighters rated as having not desirable job behaviors were rated as strong in multiple Relevant Job Attributes.

The aforementioned Morton Grove specific findings might lead to a utilization of this data in order to exclude candidates who fail to be rated as per these attributes. However, the nature and complexity of the human personality and the inherent challenges associated with its

accurate assessment would support the use of caution in this interpretation. This caution is also supported by ICMA (Compton & Granito, 2002). The MGF D psychology professional, Dr. Dennis Selvig also concurs with this caveat. Specifically, Selvig advises that the effectiveness and predictability of any assessment is contingent upon a broad-based methodology as well as interpretation (personal communication, February 23, 2007). For these reasons, Selvig reinforced the need for close collaboration in interpretation of psychological results between the psychologist providing opinion, the investigator compiling data during the background investigation, and the hiring authority; The Fire and Police Commission of Morton Grove.

The implications of these findings to a municipality of limited personnel and economic resources are significant. The expenditure of managerial time, effort, and expense in order to coach or discipline underperforming employees is also significant. The efficient use of these resources has profound effect upon the resulting effectiveness of emergency response as well as customer service. Small municipal fire departments also tend to provide less opportunity for advancement in rank due to existing rank structure and characteristically low rates of turnover. Therefore departments such as Morton Grove may find it advantageous to make every effort to ensure that prospective employees will have ample opportunity to experience adequate levels of job satisfaction throughout a career despite the apparent limited opportunities for advancement in rank. This philosophy maximizes the likelihood of high levels of morale regardless of economic or advancement circumstances.

This research also yields an unexpected implication for our organization. As stated in the original problem statement, our organization has failed to determine if methods used in previous pre-employment assessments are effective in predicting job performance. The results show that 20 of the 23 firefighters evaluated have exhibited desirable to highly desirable job behaviors

since being hired. This implies that previous psychological assessment has yielded accurate results approximately 87 percent of the time. In the opinion of this researcher, this constitutes a highly successful program if one considers the variables involved in accurately predicting human behavior.

Recommendations

The data collected through this research effort along with the review of available fire service related research regarding the validity of pre-employment personality assessments support the following recommendations.

The purpose of this research was to identify methods that could more effectively predict future job performance. To this end, and in light of the data yielded through this project, the MGFD and the Fire and Police Commission of Morton Grove should continue to utilize psychological and personality assessments during pre-employment evaluation of prospective employees. This commitment is supported by the combined results of researchers both inside and outside the fire service. In addition, the results of the Morton Grove data indicate successful predictive results 87% of the time since 1991. It is the further recommendation of this researcher that the Fire and Police Commission of Morton Grove emphasize the importance that firefighter candidates possess personality traits that will yield higher ratings in the Relevant Job Attributes of Public Service Orientation, Work Attitude, and Chain of Command. This can be effectively accomplished through the establishment of commission standards that would challenge or reject the hiring of candidates rated as marginal or poor in two or more of these attributes.

Additionally, a standard should be established that challenges the consideration of candidates that are rated as marginal or poor in two or more of the Relevant Job Attributes established. In order to accomplish this, it will be necessary for the department and the Fire and Police

Commission of Morton Grove to better understand their roles in the overall hiring process. Prior to this research the FPCMG simply reviewed the overall recommendation of the CPPA without regard to implications of the ratings received in the specific Relevant Job Attributes. This research should validate the FPCMG's actions in weighting its future hiring decisions based upon a broad-based methodology that should emphasize acceptable to strong psychological ratings in the areas of Public Service Orientation, Work Attitude, and Chain of Command.

The aforementioned recommendations would logically extend to the need for all identified stakeholders in the hiring process to work more interactively with each other. For example, the preliminary findings and documentation of a candidate's past behavior patterns as determined through a background investigation should be forwarded to the evaluating psychologist prior to the psychological evaluation. This sequence will provide the psychological professional with additional behavioral data that can be utilized in conjunction with the results of standardized personality instruments in order to provide a more complete snapshot of the candidate's personality. In addition, the department should periodically provide the evaluating psychological professional with job performance evaluations of candidates during the initial probationary period. This will facilitate practical comparisons regarding performance expectations of new firefighters and results of recently administered psychological assessments in order to encourage input from the department psychologist regarding subjects of underperforming members, suggested coaching strategies, or recommendations for retention or discharge. Also, this approach will provide a method that could be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the pre-employment screening process so that corrective interventions may be undertaken early in a firefighter's career.

This research has convinced this author that, in fact, no “silver bullet” personality assessment instrument can be arbitrarily employed by the Village of Morton Grove in order to unilaterally qualify or disqualify candidates for consideration. Therefore, a recommendation to utilize a specific personality assessment instrument in the pre-employment process is impractical. Rather, the recommendation of increased collaboration and interaction between the department, the Commission, and the psychology professional will provide a cooperative forum in which future alternative hiring strategies might be explored. The Fire and Police Commission of Morton Grove should continue its efforts to investigate the application of broad-based methodologies and a combination of pre-employment assessment strategies in order to strive to hire those candidates that prove to have the greatest potential for success in our vocation.

The need for further fire service specific research regarding personality trait theory is apparent. The abundance of studies and available data as it pertains to law enforcement personnel would support this. Instead, the organizational and industrial psychology community should take steps to more thoroughly explore studies that would yield empirically supported data that is specific to the fire service regarding the predictability of job performance based upon personality traits. The Morton Grove data cited in this research is based upon application of performance criteria by one fire officer (the researcher). Future research utilizing specific performance rating instruments designed to isolate specific personality trait-based behaviors might serve to further specify the value of trait-based pre-employment personality assessment tools. Furthermore, the compilation of results of trait specific job performance rating instruments into an overall consensus score for each, from multiple evaluators, would decrease the possibility of personal bias skewing the results of future research.

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Appendix A

MGFD Firefighter Performance Category Classification (Based upon review of Annual Evaluations and Personnel Files)

Highly Desirable

<u>Firefighter</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
A	Exceeds Expectations
D	Exceeds Expectations and Commendation
K	Exceeds Expectations
L	Exceeds Expectations
P	Exceeds Expectations and Commendation
T	Exceeds Expectations

Desirable

<u>Firefighter</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
B	Meets Expectations
C	Meets Expectations
E	Meets Expectations
I	Meets Expectations
J	Meets Expectations
M	Meets Expectations
N	Meets Expectations
O	Meets Expectations
Q	Meets Expectations
R	Meets Expectations
S	Meets Expectations
U	Meets Expectations
V	Meets Expectations
W	Meets Expectations

Not Desirable

<u>Firefighter</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
F	Reprimand(s)
G	Below Expectations and Suspensions
H	Below Expectations

Appendix B

MGFD Candidate Pre-employment Psychological Assessment (CPPA) Relevant Job Attribute (RJA) Evaluation Criteria

Communication Skills

- Effective oral and written communication skills
- Command of the English language
- Active listening skills (Ability to acquire critical information)
- Willingness to share ideas (Openness)
- Clarity and timeliness in communication
- Effective listening and speaking with the Dispatch Center and Resource Hospital

Public Service Orientation

- Motivated to serve the public (vs. self interests such as thrill-seeking)
- Advises and assists the public with openness
- Social or “People” orientation (Sociability, Extroversion)
- Effective oral communication skills
- Oriented towards education, prevention, and safety

Work Attitude

- Willingness to “pitch in” with routine and mundane tasks
- Fully prepared for emergencies
- Steady and consistent work habits (Self-motivation preferred)
- Organizational skills
- Conscientiousness and good follow-through
- Attention to detail
- Absence of neuroticism
- Willingly participates in training, inspections, and building surveys
- Performs required tasks in effective and efficient manner

Respect for Chain of Command

- Performs specific duties as assigned
- Responsiveness to authority
- Agreeableness
- Supports the organization (displays loyalty)
- Inquiries of superiors are appropriate and timely
- Respects the positional authority of superiors in public
- Keeps superiors informed

Assertiveness and Composure

- Confidence (even courage, as needed)
- Practical intelligence (ability to apply training)
- Cognitive abilities (ability to master policies/procedures)
- Adaptability/flexibility (especially in novel, changing, or unfamiliar situations)
- Frustration tolerance
- Effective oral communication skills
- Lack of neuroticism
- Ability to instill confidence (bearing and persuasiveness skills)

Occupational Resiliency

- Tolerance for extreme environmental conditions
- Ability to cope with tragic, gruesome, or macabre events
- Ability to cope with wearing hot and heavy protective gear
- Frustration tolerance/endurance/tenacity
- Openness
- Realistic expectations of self and others
- Reliable coping strategies
- Available emotional support systems

Professional Development

- Desire to participate in training (practice drills, fire inspections, etc.)
- Inclination to maintain skills and certifications
- Motivation to benefit the department
- Inclination to upgrade skills and job knowledge
- Agreeableness
- Openness
- Stays current with advancements in the field

Appendix C
MGFD Candidate Pre-employment Psychological Assessment (CPPA)
Relevant Job Attribute Summary

Firefighter	Communication Skills	Public Service	Work Attitude	Chain of Command	Assertiveness	Resiliency	Professional Development
Highly Desirable							
A	S	S	S	A	A	A	S
D	M	A	A	A	A	A	A
K	S	S	S	S	A	A	A
L	A	A	S	A	A	A	P
P	S	S	S	S	A	S	A
T	A	A	S	A	S	A	S
Desirable							
B	S	S	S	S	A	S	S
C	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
E	A	S	S	A	S	A	S
I	A	S	A	A	A	A	A
J	A	S	S	S	A	A	A
M	A	A	S	A	A	A	S
N	A	A	S	A	A	A	M
O	S	A	S	A	A	A	A
Q	S	A	A	A	A	A	A
R	S	A	S	A	A	A	A
S	A	S	A	A	A	M	A
U	A	A	S	A	A	A	A
V	A	A	A	M	A	A	A
W	A	S	S	S	S	S	A
Not Desirable							
F	A	M	A	M	S	A	M
G	A	M	M	M	A	A	A
H	A	M	M	A	A	A	M

Key: S = Strong A = Acceptable M = Marginal P = Poor